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Stopping By Woods On A Snowy Evening. Robert Frost Poem. Appreciation By P S Remesh Chandran

Editor, Sahyadri Books & Bloom Books, Trivandrum



By [PSRemeshChandra](#), 19th Mar 2011. Short URL

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Link: <http://sahyadribooks-remesh.blogspot.in/2012/02/08-stopping-by-woods-robert-frost.html>

Nature creates many beauties for man to observe but man, being burdened with the multitude of tasks of running a family, cannot spare his time for sharing the pleasantness nature imbues. In his rush of life he is forced to abandon the easy solaces nature offers which if accepted, would have served as a balm for his mind in flames. Robert Frost's poem 'Stopping By Woods On A Snowy Evening' shows a glimpse of what treasures man has lost. True, what man forgets first is the beauty of his mother.

A British poet trained on practical American lines.



01. Robert Frost Portrait 1913.

Robert Frost was a farmer and poet who had a deep concern for nature. He lived during 1874-1963. 'Stopping By Woods On A Snowy Evening' is his world famous poem which appeals to man's desire to be always be with nature. In the poem we see the poet riding a little horse into a snow falling forest in the evening. His sense of beauty tends him to stay but his dominating sense of duty sends him away. The genius of Frost shuttles between dream and

reality and finally lands on immediate reality. Perhaps his long American life might have trimmed him on practical lines.

Nature's Cynosures are for all the world to see.



02. Whose Woods These Are I Think I Know.

The poet stops by the wood on a snowy evening in winter. He doesn't know who the owner of the forest is. Judging from the fact that there were no signs of any modern constructions to be seen there, he assumes that the owner of the forest might not be a town's man, but a villager. So far so good. He hopes that the owner will not appear there at that time of heavy snow fall, as he does not wish to be seen tress-passing into private land. Sweet English reserve and shyness! Even though somewhat reluctant to enter a private property, his soul's desire to be with nature tempted him and he entered the forest riding his horse.

All a winter's work for the squirrels and sparrows to see.



03. All A Winters Work.

Nature's blessings are man's common asset, limited to no one's ownership. She creates her cynosures for all the world to see, through generations and ages. She creates them not exclusively for humans, but anticipating the admiring eyes of the squirrels, sparrows, peacocks and the marsupials also.

Animal instincts are sharper-tuned to sensing danger than man's.



04. To Watch The Woods Fill Up With Snow.

Snow heavily falling on the trees and rocks and shrubs will form curious images of strange shapes and sizes. The poet plunges deep into observing their beauty and quite forgets the passing of Time. The horse was more danger-conscious and responsive to surroundings than the poet. Have anyone ever heard about an animal that took its own life? It became suspicious. What is this fellow on my back doing?

Between the woods and frozen lake.



05. Between The Woods And Frozen Lake.

Dangers of an ink-black night are ahead. No farm houses are to be seen anywhere nearby. They are standing between an unfriendly wood and a frozen lake where no one will get shelter and can survive. Man and animal can be lost and frozen in these circumstances. Besides, it is the darkest night of the year that is approaching. Is this man on my back having ideas of suicide? Animal instincts are sharper-tuned to sense danger than man's. So thinking such and such, the horse gave his harness bells a shake to ask his master whether there was any mistake. Actually he was asking his master why they were stopping and staying in that unfavorable atmosphere for long.

The Tiny Little Boy with Hay-Ho, the Wind and the Rain.



06. Forage is scarce in winter, so a long neck.

The sounds of the horse-bells were heard distinctly against the only other background sound there, the swish-swishing sound of the easily-flowing wind sweeping against the incessantly down-falling snow. The exquisiteness of the description here reminds the readers of another master craftsman. In *The Twelfth Night* by William Shakespeare, there is a little song sung by the clown:

'When that I was a tiny little boy,
With hay- ho, the wind and the rain.'

Everyone knows the wind and the rain, but who is this Mr. Hay-Ho? Critics have long debated who this Hay Ho is. It is very simple. Every little child knows Hay Ho; it is the combined effect of sound caused by wind on the rain personified. When wind blows against a green paddy field and the long lines of grass bow their heads in row after row, Hay Ho is present there. When we walk along a tar road while the rain comes down in torrents and the wind sweeps heavily against the rain, then again we can see Hay Ho on the road, coming towards us and going away from us. Hay Ho is indeed something to a tiny little boy and also for the poets. One is always the other. An exactly similar beauty with words is created here by Frost, in describing in vivid and suggestive words the swish-swishing of the wind and the rain in the snow-filled forest.

One single line written across the face of Time: How far to go before rest?



07. Miles to go before I sleep, and miles to go.....

The timely sound of his horse-bells roused the master to reality and reminded him of his immediate duties. Thus rightly inspired, the poet continues on his journey, singing those famous lines which made this song immortal.

'The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.'

An admirer of Robert Frost from across the oceans.



08. The woods are lovely, but I have promises to keep.

The sleep referred to here is the final sleep. These are lines written across Time, to inspire the world through ages. It is not certain whoever were inspired, excited and intoxicated with these lines. But it is known, the famous author of books such as *Glimpses Of World History* and *The Discovery Of India* and the first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, wrote them down on his walls to be seen always.

Bloom Books Channel has a video of this song.



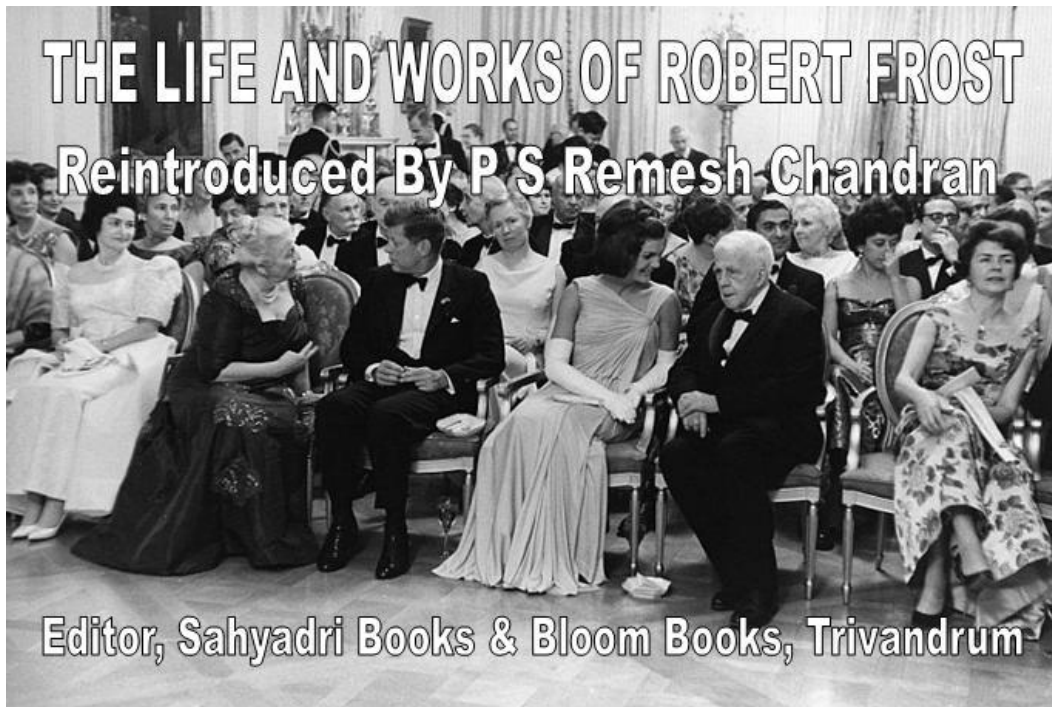
09. *Stopping By Woods Video Title.*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zy6nlrKRH10>

Bloom Books Channel has a video of this poem *Stopping By Woods On A Snowy Evening*. A primitive prototype rendering of this song was made in a crude tape recorder decades earlier, in 1984. In 2014, a home made video of this song was released. In 2015, a third version with comparatively better audio was released. The next version, it's hoped, would be fully orchestrated. It's free for reuse, and anyone interested in can develop and build on it, till it becomes a fine musical video production, to help our little learners and their teachers.

Link to this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zy6nlrKRH10>

**Also read the article *The Life And Works Of Robert Frost*
Reintroduced By P S Remesh Chandran**



10. Life And Works Of Robert Frost Article.

Readers are advised to also read the article **The Life And Works Of Robert Frost Reintroduced By P S Remesh Chandran** in Sahyadri Books Trivandrum at <http://sahyadribooks-remesh.blogspot.in/2017/04/073-life-and-works-of-robert-frost.html>

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Editor of Sahyadri Books & Bloom Books, Trivandrum. Author of several books in English and in Malayalam. And also author of 'Swan, The Intelligent Picture Book'. Edits and owns Bloom Books Channel. Born and brought up in Nanniyode, a little village in the Sahya Mountain Valley in Kerala. Father British Council-trained English Teacher and mother university-educated. Matriculation with High First Class, Pre Degree studies in Science with National Merit Scholarship, discontinued Diploma Studies in Electronics and entered politics. Unmarried and single.

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[Rathnashikamani](#)

31st Mar 2011 (#)

This is again a wonderful appreciation of one of my favorite poets, Robert Frost. I don't think there is anybody in the world who may not admire this great poet.



[PSRemeshChandra](#)

16th Apr 2012 (#)

In every nook and corner of the world, this poet has admirers. But if poets are to be believed, there indeed are people who never admire a poet- the residents of his native village, the people with whom he grew up, played, fought and lived. Anyway it would be hard for a poet for his villagers to admire him and behave in a totally new way.



[NEERAJ BHATT](#)

16th Oct 2011 (#)

This is an apt appreciation of the poem "STOPPING BY WOODS ON A SNOWY EVENING" I read this poem in class 12. It is since then that I got the last stanza remembered for ever.



[PSRemeshChandra](#)

16th Apr 2012 (#)

I too studied it dear Neeraj Bhatt. Thank you for going through the article.



[PSRemeshChandra](#)

16th Oct 2011 (#)

Yes Dear Rathnashikamani,
And Dear Neeraj Bhatt,

Robert Frost wrote wonderful poetry and in my boyhood days I got one very old pocket book sized illustrated edition of a collection of his poems from my father. I still remember the pictures from the book. I very much wished to one day sing his songs exactly like my father did and in my later years I somewhat succeeded in this. Like my father I also had the opportunity to teach a few of his poems. Illustrating his poems is beyond my ability which I tried to augment by incorporating a few good pictures. Thank you both for your ripe opinions.



[Rathnashikamani](#)

17th Oct 2011 (#)

That was really wonderful to know that you've been an admirer of Robert Frost and cherished great memories and desire to sing such a great poet.

I too love his poems. They are such master pieces which must be read carefully and contemplated upon to enjoy them to full extent.



[PSRemeshChandra](#)

17th Oct 2011 (#)

There are thousands who are admirers of Frost but the majority of them are unfortunately unable to sing his poems. First a casual reading, then a few attempts to sing it in fast rhythm, and finally succeeding in actually sing it clarifies the poem and imprints it on our minds more effectively than by reading it a hundred times. It is, I believe, the straight road to understanding, appreciating and enjoying a poem. The more we do this kind of thing without any regard to such awful talentless recordings as made available in Poetry Out Loud, etc, the more an expert we become. It is like unlocking a complex mechanism. Many poems such as those like Tagore's, Matthew

Arnold's and T. S. Eliot's have excellent locking mechanisms in them but through perseverance now they are excellent music for me. I perfectly well sing Where The Mind Is Without Fear, Forsaken Merman and Waste Land. Anyone can try. Music is the best means of Instruction. It most often effectively substitutes a teacher. Moreover poems are born out of tunes and are meant to be sung anyway.

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